c) a biologically active fragment comprising at least 15 contiguous amino acids of an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1, and

d) an immunogenic fragment comprising at least 15 contiguous amino acids of an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.

11. (As Twice Amended.) A composition comprising an effective amount of a polypeptide of claim 1 in conjunction with a suitable pharmaceutical carrier.

12. (Reiterated.) A purified antibody which binds specifically to a polypeptide of claim 1.

13. (Reiterated.) A purified agonist which specifically binds to and modulates the activity of a polypeptide of claim 1.

14. (Reiterated.) A purified antagonist which specifically binds to and modulates the activity of a polypeptide of claim 1.

15. (Reiterated.) A pharmaceutical composition comprising an antagonist of claim 14 in conjunction with a suitable pharmaceutical carrier.

16. (Reiterated.) A method for treating liver disease comprising administering to a subject in need of such treatment an effective amount of a pharmaceutical composition of claim 15.

17. (Reiterated.) A method for detection of a polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide comprising SEQ ID NO:1 in a biological sample, said method comprising the steps of:

a) hybridizing an isolated and purified polynucleotide which is complementary to a polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide comprising SEQ ID NO:1 to nucleic acid material of a biological sample; and

b) detecting said hybridization complex, wherein the presence of said complex correlates with the presence of a polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide comprising SEQ ID NO:1 in said biological sample.

18. (Reiterated.) The method of claim 17, wherein before hybridization, the nucleic acid material of the biological sample is amplified by the polymerase chain reaction.

19. (Reiterated.) A method of screening for a compound that specifically binds to the polypeptide of claim 1, said method comprising:

a) combining the polypeptide of claim 1 with at least one test compound under suitable conditions; and

b) detecting binding of the polypeptide of claim 1 to the test compound, thereby identifying a compound that specifically binds the polypeptide of claim 1.

20. (Reiterated.) A method of screening for a compound that modulates the activity of the polypeptide of claim 1, said method comprising:

a) combining the polypeptide of claim 1 with at least one test compound under conditions permissive for the activity of the polypeptide of claim 1; and

b) assessing the activity of the polypeptide of claim 1 in the presence of the test compound; and

c) comparing the activity of the polypeptide of claim 1 in the presence of the test compound with the activity of the polypeptide of claim 1 in the absence of the test compound, wherein a deviation between the activities is indicative of a compound that modulates the activity of the polypeptide of claim 1.

Please add the following new claims:

– **21. (New.)** A polypeptide of claim 1, comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.

22. (New.) A composition comprising an effective amount of a polypeptide of claim 21 in conjunction with a suitable pharmaceutical carrier. --